



Focus

2002 Supplemental Budget Request

Addressing the General Fund shortfall: \$14.4 million

In responding to the Governor's request for General Fund savings, the Department of Ecology offered a strategy that uses higher-than-anticipated revenues in dedicated funds (other than the General Fund) in conjunction with reducing a number of environmental activities to live within means and generate savings.

The majority of the \$14.391 million savings proposal involves three "fund shifts." The first calls for supporting watershed planning grants (**\$8.2 million**) from Local Toxics Control revenues, rather than the General Fund. The second calls for paying for our aquatic-pesticides activities (**\$359,236**) out of the Water Quality Permit Fees, instead of the General Fund. The third shift pays for stream-gauging activities (**\$500,000**) from three other dedicated fund sources instead of the General Fund.

Responding to last year's drought required less funding than originally anticipated, allowing **\$3 million** to be transferred back to the General fund. The remaining \$2.3 million in savings will come from funding cuts in five areas:

- As called for in state law, the auto-emissions program (in the Air Quality Program) will operate within the amount of money collected through emission-check fees, with no more subsidy from the General Fund - saving **\$711,200**.
- Given the timing of the planning efforts, some watershed grants cannot be spent this year and cannot be carried over to the second year of the biennium - saving **\$800,000**.
- Because of an effective bidding process for the rescue tug at Neah Bay, we can get the 200 required days of service for less than the legislature provided - saving **\$148,000**.
- Since contracted tug services have not been used in Puget Sound, the appropriation can be eliminated - saving **\$200,000**.
- Other savings of **\$473,000** will be achieved through reduced attorney services and other administrative efficiencies.

Meeting other local needs through the supplemental budget

In managing the shift of watershed planning grants to other dedicated revenues, we still intend to meet the state's commitments to local jurisdictions for both watershed planning and cleaning up local toxic-waste sites. Given the higher-than-anticipated revenue to the Local Toxics Control Account, a \$24 million fund balance is forecast, based on the current level of authorized spending.

The Department of Ecology is requesting that about half of the anticipated balance (\$13.5 million) be appropriated in the supplemental budget to fund local "remedial action" toxic-cleanup projects that are under way or ready to start this biennium. As a result of this appropriation, seven new cleanup projects that are ready to proceed would be able to move forward.

After addressing remedial-action cleanups across Washington, **\$8.2 million** of the remaining balance is requested to pay for the grant commitments to the 45 local planning units currently developing watershed plans.

Supporting the Governor's water strategy

The Department of Ecology's supplemental budget request to the Governor includes a placeholder of approximately \$0.75 million to support water-reform legislation that is being developed. Additionally the regional water initiatives in both the Columbia River and Central Puget Sound will continue with \$690,000 in funding from the Water Quality Account.

Continuing the rescue-tug service for winter 2002-03

As mentioned previously, the current biennial budget provides funding for the rescue tug stationed at Neah Bay for 200 days of service during the winter months of 2001-02. To continue this service for 200 days in the winter of 2002-03, supplemental funding of \$1.4 million is requested from the Local Toxics Account (funds will be transferred to the Oil Spill Prevention Account for appropriation).

Requesting funds for other self-supporting environmental activities

Department of Ecology's supplemental budget request also seeks one-time money from dedicated funds to support:

- a loan-tracking system
- a health assessment related to agricultural burning
- a litter-prevention campaign
- a septage-management strategy
- a ground water data system

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